

i call my mother, long-distance, collect,  
and ask, "where are the snows of rochester?"  
the girl i'm with reminds me  
that i used to be in love.  
two wives restore two different me's.  
one friend lets me love tucson again, and laugh,  
while the other does the same for jesuit high.  
my daughter is what i'm like now;  
my son what i was as a little boy.  
rodger refreshes me on the elizabethans;  
ray tells me what i said when i was drunk.

no one has been more lucky  
in the personages of his life  
because no one's had less  
a mind to call his own.

HE PROBABLY WOULD HAVE BEEN EASIER TO GET ALONG WITH  
THAN BELLA ABZUG

i loved my introduction to literature class  
because the students, none of them english majors,  
had a totally untrained approach to literature.

for instance, one guy in the back row  
who was not only bright  
but who had had experience in a civil service job,

raised his hand to say, "i can't help thinking  
that bukowski, if he had only used the same  
psychology on his superiors  
that he did on his women,

could have risen to postmaster-general."

-- Gerald Locklin

Long Beach CA

THE LADY WITH THE DOG:

her hair is white  
she's in her mid-40's  
lives in my neighborhood.  
first time I saw her she screamed:

"you old fucker! I know you're fucking all those young girls! you ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

next time I saw her  
she told me:

"you know, 2 niggers raped a white girl last night -- right down the street. but they caught them! they caught those bastards!"

next time I saw her she was watching a young man in a car making a U-turn. as his car neared her she screamed: "you ain't gonna pick up my ass, punk!  
I'm going to report you to the cops!"

then a new girlfriend came to see me. "my god!" she said.  
"my god!"

"what?"

"who's the woman with the white hair and the bobby sox and the dirty white dog?"

"o, she lives in the grey court down the street ...."

"she said I was an eater of shit and a prostitute and a witch!"

"she did?"

"she almost attacked me! her dog growled!"

"she's crazy."

we sat down across from each other over the coffeetable and I opened the first bottle of wine.

"I know you wouldn't go to bed with that," she said.

"she's crazy," I said and poured 2 glasses of wine.